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## **Rubbing Off the Corners: The Rite of Passage of the Teacher Trainee in 20th Century New Zealand**

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*Abstract: This paper investigates how, in the early 20th Century training colleges of New Zealand, student teachers actively constituted themselves through internalising the norms imposed upon them by the educational authorities. It explores how their training resulted in "rubbing off the corners" so that they could be ethically and pedagogically transformed into the ideal teacher. The result of this was the emergence of a disciplined body of conforming individuals who could implement the state's moral and pedagogical imperatives. This occurred through a three-phase rite of passage: the separation of trainees from their original society; a transition in the enclosed world of the college where their existing identity was deconstructed; and (iii) a subsequent integration into the society of teachers when acculturation had occurred and appropriate norms and values had been internalised. This paper draws extensively on the theories of Arnold van Gennep and Michel Foucault and is based on a recent doctoral investigation.*

### **Introduction**

We see now what a fine thing it is to have been through a training college, what a new world it has opened up to us, how it has rubbed off our corners, modified our prejudices, broadened our vision. (*The Recorder*, 1919, p.7)

The way in which the subject constitutes himself in an active fashion, by the practices of self, these practices are nevertheless not something that the individual invents by himself. They are patterns that he finds in his culture and which are proposed, suggested and imposed on him by his culture, his society and his social group. (Foucault, 1988, p.11)

Drawing on the theoretical work of Arnold van Gennep and Michel Foucault, this paper explores learning to teach from a different perspective. It views induction into teaching as a rite of passage in which trainees are educated and socialised in order to become docile, useful and able to teach the young of society.

This paper, therefore, explores how, in early Twentieth Century New Zealand, student teachers actively constituted themselves through their own agency and, as Foucault indicates in the above quote, through the norms and patterns imposed upon them by their culture, society and social group. Students themselves believed that their training “rubbed off” their corners so that they could fit more readily into an ideal teacher identity: one based on an ethic of service. Such a radical ethical and pedagogical transformation was difficult to achieve in the highly devolved world of the pupil teacher where effective instruction was inconsistent and dependent on the competence of their head-teacher. Centralisation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) was considered by educators, teachers and policy makers to be the solution and this led to the gradual displacement of the pupil teacher system (Openshaw & Ball, 2006). By the 1920s, the training colleges had achieved a complete monopoly of ITE and this lasted until the early 1990s when the first of the Colleges amalgamated with its neighbouring university. The four state-provided training colleges could now educate and socialise trainees within a highly controlled environment. The result of such training was the emergence of a disciplined body of conforming individuals who could implement the state’s moral and pedagogical imperative. Foucault maintains that such processes were accomplished through the implementation of both disciplinary and regulatory constructs of power (ie. bio-power) in a setting of enclosure and exclusivity (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p.5). In such a setting, trainees were required to pass through a three-phase rite of passage. The purpose of the rite of the passage was to dismantle the original identity of the trainees in order to reconstruct a new teacher identity. Trainee teachers played an active part in their own identity formation by absorbing and consciously accepting the ritual practices, norms and values that were imposed upon them by the educational authorities. It is this very process that is examined in this paper.

### **Theoretical Underpinning**

The theoretical underpinning of the article is derived from the ideas of two significant theorists: Arnold van Gennep and Michel Foucault. Van Gennep’s anthropological work explains the rites, rituals and ceremonies involved in inducting novitiates into their own specific society through a “rite of passage” (Van Gennep, 1906). This requires the temporary removal of inductees from their society for specialist training. During this induction period, they are equipped with the skills, knowledge and values necessary for a full return to society with a reconstructed identity, elevated social status and new roles and responsibilities. This process explains the rite of passage undertaken by student teachers.

Foucault’s post-structural work on institutions of the state, the exercise of power, the use of regulatory and disciplinary mechanisms, and the subjectification of individuals is also highly salient to this paper as it throws light on why the state thought it necessary to mastermind the whole project of teacher training (Foucault, 1976, 1977, 1980, 1982, 1995).

Although there are many differences in the disciplinary orientations of van Gennep and Foucault, their work is complementary and, taken together, they help illuminate the highly political nature of how and why student teachers became fully qualified teachers in colonial New Zealand.

In addition to Harte’s work (1972) on the training of teachers in New Zealand from its origins until 1948, several institutional histories of Colleges of Education have been published which provide an insight into ITE provisions. The most recent of these take a theoretical and critical stance by analysing their respective institutions within a highly

controversial national context (Openshaw, 1996; Fletcher, 2001; Keen, 2001; Shaw, 2006). This paper adds to this platform of existing literature on ITE in New Zealand by attempting to provide a different dimension: that of the social and cultural lives of the training college students themselves. Increased attention is therefore paid to archival sources, particularly to the training college magazines as these provide an insight into the power/knowledge nexus and how this permeates institutional practices and the practices of student teachers' everyday lives whilst undergoing their rite of passage to becoming a fully qualified teacher.

### **The Rite of Passage of the Normal School/Training College Student: Towards an Ideal Teacher Identity**

On the cusp of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, most agents of the state held an ideal teacher identity which revolved around a sound ethic of service. This incorporated the pedagogic values of modesty, hard work, obedience and a competent level of literacy. It was summarised in the report of Dunedin Normal School's Principal (the very first normal school set up in 1876) when he stated that the aim of training was to produce teachers who were, "humble, industrious and instructed" (Keen, 2001, p.14.).

Educational policy makers came to believe that the characteristics underscoring an ideal teacher identity could be inculcated more effectively by exposing trainees, collectively, to the exclusive institutional values and practices of a state controlled training institution. It was widely thought that if teachers were transformed, then society would also be transformed. In voicing the state's ambitious intention of improving 'the social, moral and economic conditions of society', George Hogben, the Inspector General of Education, declared to the 1901 Royal Commission on Teachers (the Hogg Commission):

The greatness of a country is founded on the right upbringing of its children, and the schools, whose first care it is, depend for their power for good upon the character, skill, and intelligence of the teachers. We urge, therefore, that hardly any sacrifice is too great for the colony to make on behalf of the sound training of its young teachers (The Hogg Commission, 1901, p.ix).

The "sound training" provided by the early training colleges aimed at the radical re-formation of trainees' social, moral, intellectual and physical identity so that they could, in turn, shape the character of a new generation of children. This was achieved through a well orchestrated rite of passage.

Arnold van Gennep's notion of a rite of passage conceptualises the transformation process from neophyte to 'ideal' teacher. This rite, apparent in all societies, marks out a ceremonial sequence from novitiate to full qualification and includes three phases: separation, transition (liminary), and integration (postliminary). All three were evident in the training college system and each had a specific purpose. The first phase requires that teacher trainees sever existing social and physical ties with their old world by relocating to the training colleges situated in the main urban centres or into officially approved boarding accommodation. Attendance at college signals the start of the second, transitional phase. Here, trainees are exposed to new ways of doing things through a specialist body of scientific knowledge and through imposed ritual practices unique to their new society of teacher trainees. The concept of 'ritual' used here is primarily an anthropological concept, Goody describes it as "a category of standardised behaviour (custom)" (Goody, 1961, p.142). As there were only four training institutions in the country, and these were all centrally controlled, minimal variations to behaviours, values, and norms were evidenced in

each institution. Once student teachers had fully internalised the new knowledge, values and norms, the third phase of incorporation was complete and trainees were ready to return to their 'new' society as fully qualified teachers with a corresponding rise in status, rights and responsibilities.

This rite was less effective in a pupil teacher system which was diffuse, individualised and relied on the willingness and pedagogic competence of headteachers in schools scattered throughout the colony. An insistent demand from educators, policy makers and teachers, resulted in strengthening and popularising the notion of the training college. The centralisation of the colleges commenced with George Hogben's initiatives in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and continued with a series of successive policies and reports until the hegemony of the colleges was achieved in the late 1920s. Hall and Millard (1994) maintain that the colleges provided regimes of order which: provided state sanctioned school and College curricula; enforced a set of disciplinary technologies such as comparing trainees' performance with a fixed set of norms; exercised discipline and control; maintained maximum efficiency through timetables, regulations, and compulsory attendance; relied on examinations, grading and record keeping for comparative purposes; placed trainees under constant surveillance; and made distinctive use of specially designated space and architecture. Openshaw (1996) points out that the norms circumscribing the training course of teachers were, in reality, ways of sorting students and sifting out undesirable candidates. The training colleges carried out such functions until well into the 1960s in their attempt to produce a homogeneous and conformist group.

The college's creation of individuals who were docile and amenable to living in a collegial and harmonious manner, and who, willingly by the end of their course, repressed their singularity for the sake of the college community, bear witness to the enactment of the two processes of subjectification and subjection theorised by Foucault (Ball, 1990). However, this did not go completely unchallenged - both students and College Principals occasionally contested the institutionalised power vested in the state and Education Boards, as the forthcoming discussion will demonstrate. Each of the three phases of separation, transition and incorporation experienced by the 'normalites' or 'collites' (as they frequently referred to themselves) will now be examined.

## **The Separation Phase**

### **A Dedicated Environment**

According to Van Gennep, separation, the first phase of the rite of passage, involves the individual in disconnecting ties with his/her existing community. This is necessary in order for novitiates to receive tightly prescribed training in their new, specialised environment. As the training colleges and normal schools were located in the four main regional centres, the majority of students wishing to train as teachers had to travel away from home. This meant that they were separated from their physical and social groups of family and friends. The college experience was only thought to be fully satisfactory if it was a total experience: this meant controlling all aspects of the trainees' on campus and off-campus life. English policy makers favoured the attachment of residential hostels to the training colleges in England to serve this very purpose; however, early New Zealand colleges had to be content with the provision of approved lodgings for their trainees. This was a source of long-standing dissatisfaction from the Principals of the Colleges, as illustrated by the following statement from W.S. Fitzgerald, the first Principal of Dunedin Training College. When reporting to the Royal Commission, he claimed that either a hostel or suitable boarding accommodation was necessary for the trainees in order to provide "proper supervision of health and conduct, which would give parents confidence in sending their sons or daughters to Dunedin"

(Morton Johnston & Morton, 1976, p.56). Forty years later, a successive College principal was still anxious about the “vulgar or inconsiderate landladies ...the only remedy is a College Hostel” (Morton Johnston & Morton, 1976, p.59). These were eventually provided in the late 1920s with most colleges adopting some form of residential hostel, particularly for women and First Year students who were thought to be the most vulnerable.

### **The Ordeal of Separation**

Uprooting new trainees from their former lives in order to be assimilated into the new culture of the training college was experienced by many students as painful and traumatic. Many students suffered from homesickness and profound dislocation. The initial feelings of despair on first encountering their new institution were so prevalent that in every edition of the Dunedin Training College magazine, a separate feature was devoted to the trainees’ first impressions of the College. Many, as intimated in the following example, expressed their fears in poetry:

When first I stood at the open door  
And gazed at the place within  
When echoes rang in resounding peals  
And the light came straggling in.

When naught of laughter or life was heard  
Where all seemed gloomy and dead  
I thought of my future sojourn there  
With a feeling akin to dread.

When hosts of others in chatting groups  
Came smiling into the room:  
They seemed to name me as ‘stranger’ there  
To deepen my dread and gloom  
(*The Recorder*, 1918, p.50)

As indicated here, separation was often experienced as a vivid and alienating experience. As van Gennep (1906) explains, trainees had to undergo such a difficult separation in order to become receptive to the forthcoming ‘binding together’ ceremonies. The latter came in the form of institutional supports such as welcoming functions and orientation activities which not only assisted students to cope with their separation, but also played a major part in their investiture into a new community.

Being assimilated into an academic community was thought to be particularly difficult for female students. There was a particular concern for their physical stamina and mental health. When the Principals of all four colleges became members of their respective university faculties in the early 1900s, they worked alongside medical practitioners and university lecturers such as Truby King and Drs. Fergusson and Batchelor, well known antagonists of tertiary education for girls. This led to an acute concern for women trainees as it was believed that their health could be jeopardised by the strain and anxiety accompanying academic study (Fry, 1985). The Principal of Dunedin Training College in 1916, for example, requested a medical examination at this particularly vulnerable stage of separation for those female students who had recently graduated from their pupil teachership to college:

Too many of them come here fresh from the worries of the teaching of large classes and also from the worry of the January examinations, and in anything but a fit state to undertake a college course without regular and compulsory medical supervision... The fact that so many students are away from home care intensifies the need.” (Morton Johnston & Morton, 1976, p.59)

Protective measures to lessen the impact of study were implemented such as monitoring, observing and chaperoning the women students in both the college and the hostel environments. The all-seeing eye of the College authorities was omni-present in the lives of the students.

### **Selection into the New Environment**

In order to protect the exclusivity of the training college environment and highlight the singularity of the new student society to which they were entering, admission of the most suitable teacher candidates assumed growing importance; although this process was still subject to fiscal and economic pressure. For example, in times of plentiful teacher supply, selection processes were adhered to much more stringently and, as the number of candidates increased, the Education Board authorities began to control the selection procedures into the closed college communities more carefully. Both formal and informal selection procedures became more exacting. Harte (1972) informs us that in Dunedin, three different groups supplied the early candidates for the training college: pupil teachers on completion of their apprenticeship; untrained assistants (and after the 1882 Normal School Regulations, those who had also been in charge of a school for over a year and had been recommended by Inspectors); and students under 35 years who had successfully passed the Training College examinations. In addition, students also had to provide evidence that they were physically fit and morally robust; a medical certificate was supplied for the former and character testimonials from esteemed citizens were necessary for the latter. As there were proportionately lower numbers of men teachers, Check (1948) observes that the entry criteria was not as strictly observed with respect to male applicants – he did not specify what this difference was other than to state that females were also required to pass an additional singing test.

Once selected into the college, the rites of separation as explained by van Genneep (1906), involve a change in the status of the initiate in order to acquire a new identity. He maintains that in order for a total separation to occur, the individual has to make changes to their existing personality, dress, hair codes and name; these are an integral expression of an individual's identity and therefore need to be radically altered. Every aspect of the student's physical appearance was controlled and modified in order to bring about conformity.

In 1930, regular inspections of students' attire were conducted and, prior to entry, students were provided with a list of necessary clothing including formal evening wear (*Listen to the Teacher*, 1986). Undergraduate gowns were worn to lectures. Hats were required for formal situations, such as teaching practice, field trips and community visits. Female students were also expected to meet the regulation dress length and, when venturing off-campus, gloves were expected. Either dark dresses with a discreet ruffle at the neck or white blouses and dark skirts were in evidence in most of the early photographs of this time. Women wore their long hair scraped back off their faces and pinned up at the back. Men wore white shirts (with specific types of collar) and ties. During and after the First World War, military uniforms were also highly desirable as they evidenced an outstanding ethic of service to the King, country and Empire. The men students possessed military uniforms as part of their military training and drill and colleges formed their own Cadet Officers' Training Corps (Shaw, 2006). Military life played a significant

part in their life, especially during the First World War. This was felt particularly keenly at Auckland College of Education when an ex-College Principal, was killed on active service (*ibid.*).

College caps, blazers and scarves in the College colours were proudly worn and trainees debated endlessly in the college magazines about which colour these should be and when they should be worn. In the 1870s most male students were depicted with various degrees of facial hair but by the 1920s most appeared clean-shaven. Rules surrounding hair length (and facial hair for males) for formal occasions, including teaching practice, were conservative and strictly enforced. A complex system of micro-penalties ensured that any sign of individuality was removed.

Communication codes (including obligatory silence at particular times) were also strictly enforced and designed to facilitate power relationships. Staff always addressed students by their formal title and surname and this was reciprocated when students addressed staff. With regard to male trainees, staff frequently addressed them with their surname alone, thus denoting their inferior status. Similar protocols were enforced in the school classroom with pupils expected to address student teachers by their title and surname – a legacy that is still with us.

Total control of trainees was exercised by the Board and College authorities and they demanded absolute compliance with College rules. Changes to physical appearance signified a major breakdown of trainees' existing identity in order that they could reconstruct a new identity more in keeping with their forthcoming status. Compliance with these regulatory demands signalled a ready consciousness to accept a deep-rooted change in their personality in order to meet the social and affiliation obligations of their new social group.

## **The Transition Phase**

### **Crossing the Threshold**

Once trainees crossed the threshold, they entered into a marginal or transitional state. In this phase, they were expected to obey the mores of their new society. This was probably the most important phase of their rite of passage. Anthropologist Victor Turner explains this stage as the "passage through a threshold or limen, into a ritual world removed from everyday notions of time and space; a mimetic enactment ... in the course of which enactment of the structures of everyday life are both elaborated and challenged" (Turner, 1969, p.ix).

Trainees experienced an entirely new regime governed by an infrastructure of rules and routines, timetables and highly prescribed curriculum knowledge: these dictated every aspect of their lives. The move into this transitional phase was often accompanied with a ceremony that took them, sometimes literally, across the threshold into a defined space dedicated specifically to different functions of their training. The student magazines are liberally scattered with references to crossing the portal or threshold and entering the hallowed halls of the institution. The following is just one example:

On a bright and sunny morning in February a youthful band of budding teachers might have been seen standing before the forbidding portals of the Training College. As they gazed up with wondrous awe, they thought of the terrors there might be within – for they too had heard far afield, of the might and strength of the 'powers-that-be' within the College walls. This then, is the aim, the goal, of the pupil teacher's ambition. Now no longer pupil teachers – no, they are a grade higher – they are students! But it is fear and



trembling that they betake themselves across its silent threshold. (*The Dunedin Training College Magazine*, 1914, p.7)

Crossing the threshold is a significant indicator of the power of the institution in both a physical and metaphorical sense. The main entrance or 'portal' of the colleges assumed great importance and the entrance door to Christchurch Training College even appeared in their College magazine, thus denoting its symbolic significance as the gateway to appropriate knowledge (*The Recorder*, 1950, p.39). Van Gennep mentions the importance of the portal in both modern and ancient societies as a territorial marker offering entrance to the 'sacred' territory beyond. Only members of the society are welcome to cross through and strangers are prohibited unless formally invited. Usually members have to undergo some form of selection ritual before they are allowed to enter the walls of the institution which define its territorial boundaries. "The door is the boundary between the foreign and the domestic worlds.... therefore to cross the threshold is to unite oneself with a new world." (Van Gennep, 1906, p.20). This was common practice in the early training colleges.

### **Assimilation**

Once inside the sacred territory of the institution, specific spaces were set aside to cement communal activity. One such space was the students' Common Room, here described with overflowing praise:

We are a merry crowd – very happy as a rule, and always 'common'. In the Common Room, we do just as we like. In the classroom we are studious and attentive but here we are simply ourselves... we talk, we laugh, we sing, we yell and we tell stories. (*The Dunedin Training College Magazine*, 1914, p. 12)

By setting aside physical spaces such as Common Rooms, the authorities were openly facilitating and making possible the bonding of students which was so necessary to assimilation into a specific community. Assimilation is defined by Park and Burgess (1921, p.735) as a process "of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and groups, and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life". Through this assimilation process, a community of purpose is forged for teacher trainees. Here common experiences shared by all the trainees formed a mutual history. Loss of both individuality and heterogeneity were encouraged in order to induce greater conformity. It was generally accepted that younger trainees could be more easily assimilated into the desired norms as they were more amenable (and susceptible) to having their character re-formed and shaped according to the ideal. Hogben, Inspector General of Education, summarised this view, "Entrants to training colleges must not be too old, otherwise they might have passed the plastic stage at which they could acquire habits, which, in the absence of a strong natural bent towards them, have to be made automatic by practice (Fletcher, 2001, p.67).

### **Disorientation**

As stated previously, van Gennep maintains that distress and anxiety usually accompany the transitional stage. This occurs as the individual strives to accomplish the radical reorganisation of their 'self'. Many of the transitional rituals are designed to heighten this confusion;

disorientation is an intended result. The disequilibrium experienced by the neophyte is a necessary precursor to the adoption of the values and norms of the 'new' society. Turner explains the process,

Their behaviour is normally passive or humble; they must obey their instructors implicitly, and accept arbitrary punishment without complaint. It is as though they are being reduced or ground down to a uniform condition to be fashioned anew and endowed with additional powers to enable them to cope with their new station in life. Among themselves, neophytes tend to develop an intense comradeship and egalitarianism. (Turner, 1969, p.95)

There is no doubt that the majority of trainees were distraught at separation from their existing society. However, if students were left in this disoriented state, the transformation process could pose a threat to the social stability of the community. Consequently, authority figures put into place safeguards and concessions shortly after the trauma had been experienced in order to reduce any disruptive effects and intensify mutual bonding. This was recognised by all the colleges who, in addition to formal enrolment procedures, provided an induction function, usually in the form of a welcoming ceremony, in order to minimise the disorientation of the trainees. In the early stages of transition, trainees were usually highly dependent on those in authority for this support; however, as they progressed through this stage, they became more certain of their 'new' selves and started to assert more independence. For example, in the early years of the colleges, the teaching staff assumed full control of the welcoming function, but once Students' Associations were formed, the Student Executive Committee and final year students frequently took responsibility for organising these affairs (always in liaison with staff). Dunedin College provides a good example of this. A Students' Association was formed in 1909 and the Executive Committee which consisted of an elected President, Secretary and six student representatives, thereafter assumed responsibility for the pastoral care of newly enrolled students (Morton Johnson & Morton, 1976, p.48). High on their list of priorities was a function designed to welcome new trainees into their new community, thus reducing the impact of separation from family and friends. One student describes the events:

Already the new Executive is taking matters in hand. The Seniors are to welcome the Juniors in the form of a picnic – and later by a social, but in the meantime the best wishes of the Principal go with us all down to the Harbour to the Maori 'Kaik'. On the voyage down all are happy and joyous, that is, except the Junior 'boys' – O! They are so shy! In fact they are nearly at the landing place before they dare move a few steps for an introduction. Even that is not needed. A wily executive has formed the plan of labelling us one and all so that all one needs is to look at the slip of paper pinned to another's coat and shake hands! (*The Dunedin Training College Magazine*, 1914, p.18)

Such activities not only provided necessary support to the new trainees, but also reinforced the hierarchical power and control of those in authority and those shortly to be in authority. It also highlighted their inclusion into a new, professionally exclusive population.

### **Disciplinary Tactics**

During the transition stage, trainees begin to believe that the experiences and ordeals imposed upon them are legitimate, necessary and advantageous to the construction of their teacher identity. At least five major disciplinary tactics, both negative and positive were evidenced to

domesticate, control and assimilate new trainees. These included implementing regulations which governed and circumscribed behaviour; testing of prescribed knowledge through examinations; practical teaching, including the 'crit' lesson; the development of college loyalty; and the acculturation of trainees into a middle class culture. The two latter aimed at assimilation into the corporate body through forming a mutual experience. These emphasised unity, collegiality, loyalty and the formation of desirable habits. As all were essential processes in this phase; each is now discussed.

### *Regulations Governing Behaviour*

Trainees were instructed on their social and moral obligations at every opportunity. Compliance was expected and serious breaches of the college rules warranted severe sanctions which could result in termination of studentship. Usually, however, breaches of college rules were minor and resulted in less severe penalties. Such transgressions consisted of missing compulsory lectures, performing pranks, and engaging in capping stunts. This student ditty from 1912 reveals the typical punishment exacted by the Principal for a breach of college rules:

A head of a pedagogue factory  
Makes students beware how they act, or he  
Docks off their pay  
Or in some severe way  
Deals with his student's refractory. (*The Recorder*, 1912, p26)

College was often regarded as a secondary school and trainees regarded as young pupils who had to be brought into line. The trainees themselves accepted this and acted as 'naughty' boys and girls, in fact, they frequently referred to themselves as 'boys' and 'girls', despite the fact that the Dunedin College Student Register recorded the age of the majority of trainees as 16-20 years (*Students' Registration Book 1894-1912*).

Different methods of correction were utilised. W. Brock, an ex-student of Christchurch, humorously recalls how the drill master used physical methods to speed up their learning: "The gymnasium was well equipped and the touch of Mr. F.J. Walker's cane on the soft parts of the body caused many a smart, if not beautiful movement" (*The Recorder*, 1927, p.54). Although the cane was not used as a punishment, it was a fairly strenuous way of enforcing correct behaviour. Numerous incidents are recalled in the student magazines where trainees were reprimanded and publicly humiliated. An ex-student from Christchurch recollects how C.T. Ascham (the Principal) controlled students' behaviour through his personal charisma and castigating wit:

The outstanding figure of those days was Ascham, whose lectures on School Method and on Physiography were delivered with a zest and sparkle that captured the interest of even the most dilatory. He was then at the zenith of his power as a brilliant lecturer, and was without equal as an exponent of the teaching art. One could scarcely help looking upon him as the whole institution. He was tough. To hear him deliver public admonition to the delinquent was a revelation, and though few escaped his searching and scientific discussion of their shortcomings, all enjoyed his lectures and appreciated his efforts in the castigation of others. I have very clear recollections of being held up to public scorn on several occasions, but this had its compensations in the keen enjoyment of the discomfiture of others. (*The Recorder*, 1936, p.10)

What is of interest here is the acceptance by the college authorities of specific minor forms of misbehaviour, with the miscreants being labelled (with a degree of admiration) as ‘delinquents’. Trainees attained a unity in that all were publicly chastised and they expected others to be treated in similar manner. They acted like children because they were treated like children. This was a way of objectifying them. Because they were so tightly controlled, it was expected that minor infringements would occur and these were frequently overlooked.

Lectures were compulsory; however, this was occasionally ignored if they were perceived by students (and presumably by senior staff) as possessing little utility value; also if the lecturer involved was regarded as having low status in the institutional hierarchy. The expectation that some lectures would be avoided or ‘bunked’ was a frequently recurring theme, as this ex-student reminisces:

Certain lectures were considered legitimate to bunk. One, in particular was science, taken in an old corrugated-iron shed in the quad by a fine but somewhat aged man, nick-named “Weary”. It was recognised that one or two should hold the fort until the end of the period, when ‘Weary’ would look up, be surprised, and mutter about ‘those who waste the Board’s time’.  
(Harlow, 1977, p.66)

However, non-attendance at weekly assemblies was not treated so leniently. Weekly assemblies and compulsory sporting and cultural days were at the heart of acculturation into college life. These get-togethers of the entire college community were turned into obligatory weekly College Days by the Principal of Dunedin Training College, Ernest Partridge, in 1909 (Check, 1948). This was also the case in other colleges. During the compulsory one-hour assembly, the student body was addressed by college, normal school or university staff. Visiting speakers were also invited. The weekly assembly was highly regarded as a unique cultural and learning opportunity incorporating essential bonding rituals.

Various techniques were used to ensure compulsion, such as calling the register and using a system of record cards indicating the number of student absences over the year (*The Dunedin Training College Magazine*, 1920, p.61). Reporting absences to the Auckland Education Board was done by the Principal, H. Milnes on a weekly basis and irregular attendance was “severely dealt with by the Board” (*Auckland Education Board Minutes*, 1887). Attendance at assemblies was mandatory not only for student teachers, but also for the Principals of the Training Colleges who were expected to set an example. In a remarkable incident, Canterbury Education Board dismissed C.C. Howard from his position as first Principal of Christchurch Normal School mainly due to his refusal to attend the Normal School’s weekly assemblies (Fletcher, 2001). The drastic consequence of not modelling the cultural mores necessary to the assimilation of student teachers, and publicly challenging the Board’s authority, resulted in dismissal.

On rare occasions, the colleges also contested decisions made by the Education Department. This occurred when the Department decided to close down the colleges during the Great Depression of 1887. At Christchurch Training College, the College authorities not only openly disagreed with the decision, they also condoned the radical protests of the trainees. The event is recalled in a later school magazine:

The students did not take kindly to this drastic cut [of the colleges’ operational grants by the Education Department], and being lively folk, made their disapproval known. They hung “Rooms to Let” in the windows and publicly hanged an effigy of the Minister of Education (the Honourable George Fisher) with the silent but grinning approval of the Principal. The

effigy was later carried in procession to the Avon and ceremoniously cast in, the boys from Normal pelting it with rocks as it sailed away. (*The Recorder*, 1950, p.12)

Despite the protest, the Education Department's decision was not revoked, the college was closed and the control of the state remained inviolate.

Pranks and practical jokes were usually treated with good humour and student magazines are full of examples where the college men decided to engage in practical jokes. C.T. Aschman, Principal of Christchurch College, was involved in one such incident when he was a student teacher in 1887:

Students then were full of fun and pranks. Mr Aschman took part in the demonstration of the closing of the College and also had a hand in a certain incident wherein half a dozen hens were carefully herded up the spiral staircase at Normal School and into the Principal's study. The door was carefully closed on the agitated birds, and the arrival of the Principal awaited with some eagerness. When he opened the door and the frightened birds flew to meet him, 'the yells could be heard out in Cranmer Square!'. (*The Recorder*, 1950, p. 13)

Van Gennep maintains that during the novitiate's transitional stage, some of the economic and legal regulations operating 'outside' of their society are modified or breached altogether by the initiates. He maintains that they are located in a sort of limbo and, as such, the normal rules of society are suspended for the duration of this transitional phase. In earlier societies this was because the novitiates were regarded as holy and sacred and therefore society, as a profane entity, had no legal jurisdiction over them. The occurrence of this phenomenon in most secular societies is still widespread. In the society of the college it was evidenced in capping pranks, high-jinks, getting drunk, minor law-breaking offences and other transgressions. There was also a reasonably high toleration of students' antics by the public, especially after periods of stress, such as examinations, or during celebration ceremonies, such as graduation.

Capping day was an occasion where both Senior and Junior students could deviate from accepted behavioural norms. Usually, a capping procession commenced the day's events with trainees parading through the city streets dressed in ridiculous costumes. They were "invariably berouged of features, variegated of attire, beaming and loud-tongued, and riotous. Without exception they had heaved the demon Swot into the nethermost pit of oblivion." The observer continues with a description of the havoc caused by the students and concludes, "No literary genius, living or dead, could ever convey in writing, an adequate impression of the horror of it all". (*The Recorder*, 1919, p.24)

Occasionally these got a little out of hand and in one such incident, the males pursued the females into their hostel accommodation. The 1926 Student Chronicles from Christchurch College's hostel, recount how the 'girls' had been watching the capping procession when a "gaudily clad troupe of varsity students sped pell-mell" towards their "quiet little common hall." (*Connon Hall Chronicles*, 1926). When the troupe burst into the room, there was chaos with wild shrieks issuing from the "girls" who scrambled under the tables. More male students broke into the hall by scaling the fire escapes, climbing onto the roof and entering through the windows. They then pursued the girls, who "first one, then another, were clasped in a vice like embrace and subjected to the ordeal of being kissed by a half-drenched, black – coated, white – whiskered parson, or by a less sombrelly clad pirate whose face, unfortunately, was liberally smeared with

coffee essence” (ibid.). Unfortunately, the consequences of this stunt were not recorded; however, the fact that it was recorded at all must have meant that it was condoned by College staff.

Ceremonial displays were a public acknowledgement of the singular, sacred and unique nature of this particular population and served as rituals of separation from society at large. They emphasised the ‘betwixt and between’ nature of this transitional phase wherein minor transgressions of society’s rules were frequently condoned and novitiates were frequently regarded as untouchable and immune from conventional penalties. This was not always the case, and other breaches of the regulations, particularly if they were perceived as undermining the fiat of educational authority, carried severe penalties, even if the transgressor was a powerful figure in the education of teachers.

### *The Ritual of the Examination*

The ritual of the examination ensures that the student is “compiled and constructed both in the passive processes of objectification, and in an active, self-forming subjectification, the latter involving processes of self-understanding mediated by an external authority figure” (Ball, 1990, p.5). The exam provides a remarkable example of obscuring individuality and commodifying knowledge. The examination bracketed the entire transitional experience of the trainee and, as the quotation indicates, its main purpose was the objectification of the trainee through classifying and dividing. The latter was strikingly evident in the New Zealand examination system where exams were set and marked in England. The ‘knowledge’ provided, delivered and tested was, for the most part, highly relevant to a country half a world away with little concession made to the New Zealand context. This cultural superiority of English epistemology and pedagogy was condoned and even encouraged by the majority of policy makers and educators of the day. Student teachers in New Zealand were forced to actively comply with the syllabus, regulations and protocols involved in the examination system as their careers depended on the results. Students themselves, therefore, actively participated in the reconstruction of their own teacher identity in a way dictated by external British authority figures.

The interconnection between knowledge and examinations (the testing of knowledge) has a long history, particularly in the universities and monasteries. Foucault perceives the modern examination as a micro-technology which supplies the institution with a summary of each individual’s learning. The individual becomes a ‘case’ within a population. The population itself also becomes a ‘case’ as it becomes identifiable, knowable and able to be organised more efficiently: “..the features, the measurements, the gaps, the ‘marks’ that make them all, taken together, a population of case, with norms and quantifiable deviations from the norm.” (Foucault, 1977, p.192)

Establishing norms was an essential disciplinary function of the training college. Examinations were a means of defining the norm and, as they were used to sift out students worthy of training, they justified the stress and anxiety provoked by them. The knowledge-power construct used so persistently in Foucault’s work is tied inextricably to the examination, “the superimposition of the power relations assumes in the examination all its visible brilliance” (ibid, p.185). Foucault argued that the examination as a disciplinary technique arose with the emergence of the monasteries. Here, the disciplinary organisation of time, space and learners became essential to the inculcation of knowledge. Within the enclosed confines of a dedicated space, control and surveillance could be exercised efficiently. In the monastic system, knowledge of curriculum and practice was assessed using a numerical system of grading individuals; these were subsequently aggregated to establish patterns of normal distribution and deviation. This identified and separated

those with potential for the priesthood and those without. Jones emphasises the close parallel between monasteries and training colleges, stating that teacher trainees,

....underwent a quasi-monastic discipline. They were subject, in fact to a confessional technology adumbrated by the normative principle of examination to prepare them for a secular practice. The regime of the training college paid meticulous attention to the surveillance, correction, and confession of the aspirant teachers. (Jones, 1990 in Ball, 1990, p.6)

The Twentieth Century training colleges of New Zealand closely adhered to this quasi-monastic model. Interestingly, the examination which tested the academic mettle of the candidate appears highly compatible to the feats of endurance described by van Gennep as a feature of the transitional phase. Novitiates have to pass insurmountable ordeals in order to prove their suitability for the third and final phase.

The theme of exercising control over the student population through the ritual of the examination runs throughout the history of teacher education. The overemphasis on measurement and grading through the medium of the examination was generally unquestioned by most authority figures in New Zealand and it is only since the 1980s that this monopoly has been challenged (McKenzie, Lee & Lee, 1996). Examinations (and the 'crit lesson') dominated not only the curriculum but the entirety of the trainees' lives. One of many examples is quoted here from the 1911 Recorder:

Soliloquy

To swat, or not to swat, that is the question;  
Whether 'tis better gaily to endure  
Unfavourable reports and be suspended,  
Or plunge headlong into all this sea of knowledge,  
And painfully imbibe some? To swat, to sit  
For each exam, by toil and midnight oil.  
To gain a C or B, or e'en degree  
(Tho' one endures th' approbation and derision  
That swat is heir to) – 'tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wish'd. To swat, to sit  
For each exam. Perchance to fail; aye that's the rub,  
For from the mystic minds of our examiners  
Who knows what fearsome questions will involve  
To utterly confound us? There's the respect  
That makes despair the student's portion...(*The Recorder*, 1911, p.19)

The use of Shakespearian verse not only indicates the vital necessity of passing examinations, it also highlights the power and idiosyncrasies of the examiners and the unexpected nature of the examination questions. It appears that questions were constructed to baffle and confuse the trainees, rather than elicit their level of knowledge. The student's soliloquy later goes on to state that students would never "grind and study hard" (ibid) if there was no certificate to be received at the end of the course. The rigid format and the meaningless content of many examination questions were frequently made the butt of student humour and derision.

As a filtering device, the examination was a powerful disciplinary technique. If students failed examinations, the total rite of passage was abruptly terminated. Fletcher highlights the number of examinations that trainees had to undertake. He explains that until 1911, students at

Christchurch could expect to take university 'terms'; the training college's internal examinations; the Department's external Teacher Certificate examinations; and the university's final examinations (Fletcher, 2001, p.85). Hollihan discovered a similar situation in the Normal Schools of Canada. He maintains that students were bewildered, not only by the content of the examination, but also by their proliferation. Through these, "the institutional authorities sought to engender bewilderment, for a confused state of mind promoted submission" (Hollihan, 2000, p.178).

As previously explained, distress led to disequilibrium and an erosion of the former identity, this was an essential prerequisite to the reconstruction of a teacher identity. Furthermore, if trainees wished to graduate, not only had they to submit to the complexities of the examination system, they were also instructed in the science of testing and eventually expected to collude with the authorities in the measurement and sorting of their own pupils. In order to do this, they had to convince themselves that such practices were necessary and beneficial, hence evidencing a wholesale internalisation of the institution's norms and values. It seems that the disciplinary technology of the examination was applied to both the teachers and the taught. As teachers themselves, trainees would have to become actively involved in the dissemination and propagation of selective institutional practices and rituals.

#### *Practical Teaching and the "Crit Lesson"*

Hierarchical observation is also critical to the control of subjects (Hall & Millard, 1994). Foucault's well-used metaphor of the panopticon explains that through constant surveillance and monitoring, those in power are able to make judgements and evaluations about those they observe (Hoskin, 1990 in Ball, 1990). During this period, this involved observation of the trainees' practical teaching by Inspectors, College Principals, teaching staff of both the college and associated normal school, and their peer group. This panopticon method of surveillance brings together "the exercise of power and the constitution of knowledge" (ibid, p.31) and is clearly evidenced in the public criticism lesson (or "crit" lesson). Knowledge of the trainee and his or her teaching capabilities (together with their propensities for enduring intense pressure) was gained through subjecting the trainee to this assessment practice.

The 'crit' lesson became a centrepiece of college pedagogy for over seventy years. It was also an event assuming cataclysmic proportions in the lives of early student teachers and dreaded by them over successive decades. It was evidenced in New Zealand as late as the 1940s. In 1898, D.R. White the second Principal of Dunedin Training College explained it thus: "every student has to teach frequently before his fellow students, and to undergo the ordeal of oral and written criticism" (*Principal's Annual Report*, 1898). The subsequent public criticism was so stringent and traumatic that women students in several English colleges were excused from its implementation and they only participated in the role of audience (Rich, 1933, p.35). No such allowance was made for female students in New Zealand, despite the fact that some were unable to cope with the experience as the following extract from a student magazine informs us:

The heart of each student missed a beat when his name went up for what may well be compared with a gladiatorial contest. This took the form of a "criticism lesson". ...Needless to say the strain produced some queer and often distressing experiences. One lady student, who had to give an observation lesson on the wheat seed, had made an enormous model in coloured plasticene. She held it up before the class, made several abortive



attempts to speak, burst into tears, rushed from the room and collapsed in the common room. (*The Manuka*, 1925, p. 26)

The 'crit' lesson carried with it a fearsome reputation and it was mentioned repeatedly by students in recollections of their college days. This formal and excruciating procedure was a critical part of the rite of passage. It involved students absorbing and enacting specific rituals in front of senior members of their new society. As a technology of discipline imposed universally on all training college students, it gained increasing currency, separated trainees from other professions, provided a shared (although dreaded) objective, subjected trainees to public humiliation and became a bonding mechanism which forged allegiances to their new social group and the institution. This rupturing of the students' mental and emotional stability is a feature "accompanying the radical reorganisation implicit in identity production" (Hollihan, 2000, p. 172). Through this exercise of ritual authority: "control, legitimacy, continuity, production and revitalisation are meant to be ensured" (ibid.). Similar to the examination, overcoming such an excruciating ordeal is part of the rebuilding of a new teacher identity. A parody of Longfellow's poem 'The Village Blacksmith' appearing in the Christchurch Normal School's 1906 magazine indicates this,

#### THE CRITICISM LESSON

Before the class but out of place,  
The forlorn Student stands,  
With terror in his pallid face  
And very trembling hands,  
In falt'ring voice he pleads his case,  
But thinks of other lands!

In pride of place, on his left hand  
The Principal doth sit;  
Beside him rests another man  
Who hath a caustic wit;  
Whilst on the left the Student band  
No errors do omit.

His manner students criticise,  
His voice they label 'bad'  
He must not try to mesmerise,  
Nor must he look too sad:  
But neither must he show surprise,  
Nor must he seem too glad.  
At last his lonely task is done  
He seeks his seat again;  
Once more he can enjoy his fun,  
No more he feels the staring;  
No longer pleasure will he shun,  
He has not worked in vain.

The Principal at last doth speak,  
And the other judge no less;  
With care the proper words they seek  
Their verdicts to express.  
On features that are strong and weak

They specially lay stress.  
(*The Recorder*, 1906)

The architecture of the college complemented different disciplinary techniques with specific rooms designated for particular functions. The 'crit' lesson was such a major ritual in the life of the college that a specific physical space was set aside for its purpose. Ex-college student, Sarah Penney describes the 'old grey stone building' where, upstairs, "there were two lecture-rooms and a large room for 'Criticism Lessons', the tiered rows on one side filled with students who watched the quivering mortal take a lesson under the critical eye of the Headmaster and principal, with classes so used to the limelight, they knew few inhibitions." (Harlow, 1977, p.66). Other colleges also had purpose-built auditoriums for their 'crit' lessons and these also sported galleries of tiered seating which enabled the audience to observe and judge the trainee's performance when teaching a class of children (usually on Friday afternoons!). The public nature of the event ensured that trainees would remember it as a revelatory moment in their rite of passage.

Trainees had to become well acquainted with organisation, routines and time management. Foucault emphasises the preoccupation of the period with the breakdown of tasks into schedules of organised time. Like the factory, the school became a regimented machine which maximised its use of time: every moment had to be productively accounted for. "The more time is broken down, the more its subdivisions multiply, the better one disarticulates it by deploying its internal elements under a gaze that supervises them, the more one can accelerate an operation" (Foucault, 1995, p.154).

Considerable time was devoted to the construction of effective school timetables. This led to teacher trainees forming the correct habits of industry for their forthcoming role. The very nature of the teacher's task was computed down to the last second as this quotation from Inspector Petrie's Report shows:

In a school with five Standards and a single teacher, I have computed that at the very least 85 separate lessons must be taught every week. In most schools of this kind (country schools) the number is 90, or over, but with proper care it may be reduced to 85. Now there are five hours a day available for school work. Roll-calling, class movements, and other unavoidable interruptions, will occupy half-an-hour of this time. There will thus be left twenty two and a half hours in the week for 85 lessons, that must be taught separately, or an average time per lesson of somewhat less than 16 minutes. (*Otago Education Board Reports*, 1881)

### *The Development of College Affiliation*

The development and assiduous nurturing of loyalty and affiliation to the training institution formed a major part of the trainees' transition phase. Common interests and activities such as teaching-practice, sports, cultural events and the sharing of a mutually shared occupational destiny served to bind trainees together. The sharing of common signs, symbols and objects played a major role in achieving cohesion between individuals who had arrived at college as a collection of individuals with different interests, backgrounds and talents. The educational authorities orchestrated this through college mottoes, songs, badges, anthems, magazines, and the establishment of various sporting and cultural clubs.

College staff encouraged the development of student unions and associations, and either out of a spirit of generosity or a desire for social manipulation, attended trainees' meetings and assisted in the organisation of student activities. All the training colleges had their own mottoes, for example, that of Auckland Training College was "Totis viribus" ("With all one's might"). These were frequently held up to students as aphorisms to be revered and honoured and were usually mentioned at important college ceremonies. The Student Association's Executives continually displayed their internalisation of college spirit by repeatedly urging trainees to pay attention to its motto. In order to preserve the notion of exclusivity and elitism, most mottoes were in Latin – this could also perhaps be seen as emulating the universities. The use of Te Reo Maori was never considered. Van Gennep maintains that in several societies during the transitional phase, "a special language is employed which in some cases includes an entire vocabulary unknown or unusual in the society as a whole" (Van Gennep, 1906, p.169). In this case, the use of Latin by the training colleges is the use of a classical lexicon denoting erudition and wisdom; Latin was also regarded as a high status subject as it was a compulsory subject for selection into the universities.

College songs also attempted to bring a sense of homogeneity. Those printed in the early student magazines were hearty and fulsome. The chorus of the Dunedin Training College in 1911 sums up its institutional values and norms:

**Dunedin Training College Song**

We're Students-in-training, way-faring;  
Our colours the brown and the gold-  
The brown for the soil we're preparing:  
The gold for the harvests untold.  
We're Teachers-in-training, Dunedin;  
This our work for each crowding year –  
To make of the schoolroom an Eden,  
To fashion a nature's career.

*(The Dunedin Training College Magazine, 1911, p.3)*

The college magazine was an excellent medium for facilitating college affiliation and inspiring loyalty to the corporate body of 'normalites' or 'collites'. College life was usually depicted as a combination of jolly fun and hard swot. The Training College magazines became "a necessary adjunct to the history and life of the College" as they recorded stories of escapades, pranks and adventurous field trips (*Otago Principal's Report*, 1911). Anecdotes, cartoons, jokes and satirical pieces appeared alongside serious articles, classical poems and limericks. They were liberally sprinkled with articles on the social issues of the day, like the Great War, (with national patriotism reflecting their own college loyalty) and the Waterfront Strike (where students not only sided with Government against the strikers, they undertook the strikers' jobs for the duration of the strike) (*The Dunedin Training College Magazine*, 1914, p.13). Educational concerns cropped up occasionally such as an article in 1911, entitled 'Cinderella of the Arts', which complained about the low status accorded to the compulsory university Education course (ibid, 1911, p.4), and articles on the benefits of curriculum subjects such as Manual Training and Physical Education (*The Recorder*, 1914, p.126). The most prolific issues were those referring to student poverty, the low rate of student allowances, and the problem of inadequate college buildings. A major portion of magazine articles was devoted to social and sporting activities with bonhomie and college-spirit pervaded every page.

On the surface, it appears that students were given the freedom to express their own ideas; after all, it was a magazine written by them and intended for them. However, this was not the case.

In the early years of the colleges, the magazines were censored and edited by staff members. Students were not allowed to express any form of criticism of the college, its curriculum, its practices or its lecturers. Fletcher (2001) draws attention to a student critique of the curriculum of Christchurch Training College in its 1922 magazine. The article stated that many students believed that the college was failing to provide a comprehensive, in depth course of Subject Studies. The Principal demanded that the whole page containing the article be removed from the magazine before it was distributed. After cutting out the offending page in every single copy, Fletcher informs us that the Editor, H.W. Beaumont, subsequently did a profitable trade selling off all the censored pages (Fletcher, 2001, p.110).

Trainee teachers at all the colleges had a well developed social life by the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with trainees attending annual picnics, socials and dances; forming musical quartets, choirs and orchestras; organising debating teams and creating several men's and women's sporting teams including football, hockey, basketball, tennis, boxing, tramping, cricket and swimming. The games played were recorded in full detail; players' profiles and blow-by-blow accounts of their finest sporting moments were also included. The whole college supported each others' endeavours. Loyalty to the College and to its members appeared to be unquestioned by the majority whilst they were members of the community.

Sporting activities also encouraged competition with other colleges and university institutions. College championships abounded and cups, trophies, tournament shields and other rewards were awarded when colleges won. Tenets such as team-work, character-building, obeying rules and collegiality were reinforced. If students did not directly play a particular sport, then they cheered on and supported their own college team. Solidarity was the result and the characteristics developed through sport were believed to be part of the internalisation of values necessary for all teachers. As Check explains,

The various [sporting] activities have served their purpose in developing in the students a well rounded character and helping to fit them to take their place in the life and activities of the communities in which they would later be associated as teachers. (Check, 1948, p.40)

Well developed sporting ability was viewed by many as a major characteristic, even a prerequisite, of the good teacher. Mr. Milne, the Principal of Auckland College reflects this,

I can account for one hundred and four students out of one hundred and eight as playing some game or other, the other four are weakly and in my opinion though they have passed the medical examination should have been rejected. A student unable to take part in a game is not in my opinion suited to school teaching. (AJHR, 1914, p.ix)

In the early days, most of the colleges did not have an Assembly Hall and this was of grave concern to successive Principals, not only because the trainees had no indoor space in which to play sports, but also because it was thought to negatively interfere with the "cultivation of the true college spirit" (Johnstone, 1949, p.44).

In this rarefied world of enclosure, relationships between trainees were developed and amplified; through these was forged an intimacy and union of sympathy that would not have occurred in the 'outside' world. The sharing of confidences, ordeals, successes and problems helped them to develop strong, enduring links with each other. A well-defined and unique 'College spirit' emerged which inspired cohesion and led to the making of life-long friends according to many ex-students' recollections. Gwen Somerset, a notable New Zealand educator, testifies to this,

when referring to her days at Christchurch Training College, she says, “We made life long friends in the exchange of ideas and the sharing of companionship” (Somerset, 1988, p. 111).

This social communion served to underscore the singular and unique nature of this body of individuals and it led to the ready identification of a particular population considered ‘sacred’. They were willingly united in their pursuit of a transition which led them away from the world of the profane and towards a new society of teachers.

#### *Acculturation into a Middle Class Culture*

The propagation of middle class values helped to ontologically manufacture a literary, refined and cultural persona within each trainee. Outside social contacts were closely controlled, segregation with like-minded individuals was encouraged and upward social mobility was taken for granted. Middle class practices and cultural experiences were engineered for students - these reinforced the expectation that, on completion, most of the trainees who came mainly from the working and lower middle classes would enter a higher social class (Watson, 1956). The student cartoon on the following page humorously depicts the change in social class, dress and attitude that results from their transition through college (*The Manuka*, 1914, p.32).

The students’ magazines are full of occasions when staff invited students into their own home for dining and entertainment - thus providing a cultural model of middle class family values. At Christchurch Training College, C.T. Aschman, the Principal, and his wife held regular Saturday evening socials. Whilst students were strengthening their bonds of friendship, they were also being exposed to culturally and socially desirable values through the performance of plays, classical music, skits and party games. Attending formal functions, balls, galas and exhibitions; cultivating an interest in the fine arts, literature and politics; engaging in literary pursuits such as reading and writing poetry; visiting museums and the theatre; and taking part in debating societies, elocution classes, orchestras and musical recitals; were all critical to imbuing the trainees with a zest for middle-class life. Feasting and fun were an integral part of the college ceremonies and this ensured that students entered into a state of desire for such cultural refinements. Social intercourse was encouraged, for example, Professor White from Dunedin professed his pleasure at the new college building which was, “so fitted up that the students, their friends, and the staff may meet in social intercourse of an evening...very significant factors in student life and training” (Morton Johnson & Morton, 1976, p.47).



# WHAT THE COLLEGE DOES FOR US.

Intermarriage between the students was a common occurrence and engagements were frequently announced in the magazines. An ex-student in the *Recorder* reminisces that in 1915, "The institution was then, as now, a highly efficient matrimonial agency" in which students met partners of similar social standing with similar occupational aspirations (*The Recorder*, 1936, p.11). Another student article declared, "'Marriages are made in heaven', runs the old adage; but surely we can justly say that that they are also 'made in our Training College' with the epidemic of engagements this year (ibid, p.22). Many eminent New

Zealanders met their future partners at training college, amongst them at this time were ex-Canterbury students C.E. Beeby who married Beatrice Newnham, and Gwen Somerset Alley who married Crawford Somerset. All of this had one aim in common, the production of a cultured, highly refined, well-mannered teacher who would live modestly according to middle class standards.

### **The Incorporation Phase**

Once an appropriate teacher identity had been established and the values and the norms of the institution had been internalised, trainees passed from the transitional phase to that of incorporation into their new society of teachers. Assimilation was deemed successful when students expressed intense feelings of attachment to their community, both people and buildings. This student illustrates readiness for the final phase of incorporation,

And now the time has come for the Seniors to leave their Alma Mater. One cannot realise until the end is near how firm a hold the old place has taken on one's affections; this barren, bleak almost gaol-like building – how could we ever grow to like it? Yet the fact remains that it has become of late very dear to us – dear through the bond of camaraderie that exists among us, through the unanimity of our hopes, and through the myriad pleasant associations which it recalls. We see now what a fine thing it is to have been through a training college, what a new world it has opened up to us, how it has rubbed off our corners, modified our prejudices, broadened our vision. (*The Recorder*, 1919, p.7)

This quotation provides an apt description of the transformative effects leading up to the third phase. The trainees come into the college timid, humble and ignorant and leave with all their prejudices and prior assumptions obliterated, i.e. all the corners have been 'rubbed off' and a whole new educational vista has been created in its stead. In short, acculturation into a new and 'improved' world view has occurred and the student has willingly been involved in this complete transformation of their identity.

Feelings of superiority often accompany this latter phase. In her autobiography, Gwen Somerset makes mention of this sense of intellectual superiority, "Some of us, in fact, considered ourselves arrogantly as superior beings. Some were reading G.B. Shaw, Ibsen, Galsworthy and the great new educator A.S. Neill, while they of the older generation were pontificating about Rousseau and Montaignes (Somerset, 1988, p.111). The self-importance that trainees now experience has been developing in conjunction with a growing identification with their new role. They regard themselves as members of an elite cadre and this prepares them for their new social role. Their new-found knowledge and total acceptance of the institution's standards lead to increased feelings of competence, ability and self esteem - a complete reversal of the emotions they experienced upon arrival. Marginalisation and dislocation has turned to inclusion, affection and loyalty to the institution and the people within it. The following song, written in 1906 for the graduating students of Dunedin Normal School demonstrates successful transformation,

Goodbye  
We are merry Normal Students,  
Met to say goodbye  
To the school and all who come here:

Holidays draw nigh.  
Goodbye, then, to old School Method  
Goodbye 'Physsy' too;  
And Psychoses, and Neuroses.  
To you all adieu!

When we first came to the Normal,  
Oh so long ago,  
Came we all in fear, in trembling.  
Why, we did not know.  
Callow youths and tender maidens,  
Such a timid show.  
Now our jolly time is ended  
And are loath to go.

If town or country claim us,  
And whereso'er they name us,  
This shall be our rule –  
Friends here are friends for all days,  
And will remember always  
The old Normal School. (*The Recorder*, 1906)

### **The Incorporation Phase**

Once an appropriate teacher identity had been established and the values and the norms of the institution had been internalised, trainees passed from the transitional phase to that of incorporation into their new society of teachers.

Completing the rite of passage is always accompanied by ritual ceremonies such as graduation balls and farewell functions. Sacra (referred to by van Gennep as sacred objects revered by the community) play a vital role in this. An example is the academic regalia (ie. gowns, trenchers and hoods) worn by graduating students. Other sacra are certificates, trophies, cups, medals, blazers, caps and other symbols which are awarded to novitiates who have successfully passed through their training and are ready to receive the rites of incorporation. Such symbols are used to reward industrial endeavour and conformity to the norms, dress, habits and behaviour of their new society. The ultimate symbol of success (ie. acculturation) is the teaching certificate itself – this is the licence which authorises the graduate to engage in a new career.

The efficacy of such rewards is enhanced through their scarcity value and it is only the winners that are honoured. The institution facilitates and exaggerates this honour through publicly announcing and celebrating the results. This public acclamation ensures full cooperation from the graduands and acknowledges that the characteristics so desired by the institution have been internalised. As Hollihan explains, "Awards were not merely an incentive to act in the fashion desired by the authorities within the institution. The process was internalised; they were transformed from training means to training ends... As their use within the institutions was intensified, they came to represent an important facet of the constructed identity" (Hollihan, 2000, p.184).



The graduation ceremony is the summation of the three phases and, in academia, the public procession of graduands through the streets is seen as a declaration to the outside world that new members have been incorporated into the world of the academy and the society of teachers.

## Conclusion

This paper has investigated how the subject (ie. the trainee) was established in the training colleges in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It has argued that the transformation of a nation through the transformation of its teachers was thought essential by policy makers and educators of the time and that this necessitated state intervention. This required the state to “define, valorise and recommend” (Goldstein, 1988 in Neubauer, p.42) specific schemes of practices, knowledge and values, and enforce them through a system of regulations and micropenalties. Internalisation of these schemes were rewarded and honoured. All of these aimed at reconstructing the identity of the teacher into one based on an ethic of service to a democratic society. Trainees were actively involved in their own transformation through their acceptance of various disciplinary and regulatory technologies of power.

The transformation process was conducted through a carefully controlled rite of passage with the three phases of separation, transition and integration, theorised by van Gennep. Accompanying each phase were various ceremonies and ritual practices that ensured a novice’s full acceptance into his or her new society upon graduation. The most important of these phases was the transitional phase which took place in the institutionalised environment of a training college. Here, the trainee was ‘objectified’ through the implementation of several disciplinary techniques based on surveillance, accountability and conformity to the institution’s demands. This resulted in initial feelings of alienation, exclusion and dislocation. In order to seek a state of equilibrium and inclusion, trainees conformed to and internalised the requirements, norms and values of the institution. During this process, trainees formed strong bonds with others experiencing identical ordeals and successes. Eventually, trainees not only accepted the norms of the institution but welcomed them, and, in order to display a semblance of self-control and self-determination, willingly acted on them. Through such a process of internalisation and self-transformation, they were no longer objectified but became ‘subjects of the State’ ready to be integrated into their new society: that of teachers.

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